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ART. V.—*Greek Grammar, translated from the German of Philip Buttmann, by Edward Everett, Eliot Professor of Greek Literature in Harvard University.* Boston, Oliver Everett, 1822. pp. 292.

THE grammar of the Greek language, with which the Eliot Professor has here favored the public, cannot but be interesting to all scholars in our country, and particularly acceptable to instructors. Its appearance we take as a good omen, both that the pursuits of classic literature are making advances among us, and that the difference of language is not to debar us from profiting by the profound learning of the Germans.

That the Greek grammars, which have hitherto been used in our schools, are deficient and unsatisfactory, is apparent from the frequency with which they have been changed; and no one has yet so far supplied the necessities of instruction, as to make a new work unnecessary. The imperfections of the treatises now in use may be traced, at least primarily, to two sources. They are abridgments, made from the more copious works of skilful philologists by scholars, who were not themselves acquainted with the whole extent of the subject. This is no trifling consideration; for however easy it may be to form a new book by compilations from several others, works thus framed are inferior in clearness, method, and accuracy to those which are founded on original research. The understanding does not find its proper food in ideas, which are given at second hand; where principles are adopted on authority, instead of patient investigation, and baldness and obscurity take the place of the clear results of continued reflection and inquiry. The other source of the deficiencies in our common Greek grammars is to be found in the circumstance, that the books, from which they are principally copied, were written before the authors had gone through all the necessary preparatory studies.

Particular grammar is a science of observation; it cannot receive a perfect form, until the whole number of individual facts has been observed and classified. To those, who first studied the subject, the variety of forms, which exist in the Greek language, seemed almost infinite; the anomalies appeared too numerous and heterogeneous to admit of being

arranged in a few comparatively simple divisions. But the more close investigations of modern scholars, some of whom still live to do honor to our age, has introduced order into every branch of the science, and exhibited the Greek grammar in its vast extent and beautiful simplicity.

Among those, who have most contributed to the advancement of this science, the first place is justly due to Herrmann, no less for the vigor of his mind, than the variety and accuracy of his learning. In a celebrated treatise,* he called the attention of his countrymen to the subject of Greek grammar, and has not only enriched it with many original observations and acute criticisms, but by opening new views of it, has showed others in what manner the study can be successfully pursued. His work on the metres is unequalled, and may justly be taken as the most favorable standard, by which the researches of the German scholars in this intricate branch of learning, may be measured. His edition of Vigerus on the Greek idioms is the most esteemed, and derives no small part of its value from his own corrections and additions. But while throughout the writings of Herrmann, we admire the manly understanding of this bold and independent critic, we find ourselves sometimes appalled by his daring conjectural emendations, sometimes bewildered by his theories, and we often desire to escape from his speculative positions to the matters of fact, which have been collected by less ingenious men.

It is only as a grammarian that Matthiae can be mentioned with Herrmann; for he holds by no means one of the highest places among the proficient in philology. In his Grammar, of which an English scholar has given a translation, we find no very profound views, not much original thought, nor proofs of a very superior understanding. Still he has been a most accurate and patient inquirer; and he holds in his department of learning the same rank, which belongs in the natural sciences to the careful but unphilosophic observer. His work is invaluable to the advanced student, for it contains an explanation of almost every form that occurs, and can be consulted as a magazine of minutest criticisms on the uses and applications of words, when taken separately, or connected

* *De Emendanda Ratione Graec. Gram.*

in sentences. But he is no philosopher ; and his Grammar is chiefly useful as a book of reference.

But that, which Matthiae had not sufficient genius to perform, has been done by Thiersch, who is one of the most accomplished scholars of the day, possessing an elegant mind and pure taste, no less than various and profound learning. His Greek Grammar, as improved in the new edition, seems to us, not only the best of that language, but the best of any language whatever. After treating of the Attic dialect, and every subject connected with it, he has subjoined an elaborate account of the peculiarities of the Epic dialect ; tracing the forms to their origin, illustrating them historically, and giving a concise but most satisfactory analysis of the Homeric verse. Having done this, the peculiarities of the other dialects are sketched with a few strokes, by enumerating and explaining the points in which they differ from the Epic. In the syntax, proofs of careful reflection and unwearied diligence in conducting his researches are visible on every page. The greatest order prevails throughout the whole, one proposition following the preceding with as much method as in books of geometry. A philosophic spirit pervades every part of the grammar ; and yet he never pauses to theorize or contend for speculative notions on language ; but is always true to his purpose of writing a grammar of the Greek. In his preface he laments, that ten years of his life, and those the most precious years of early manhood, should have been occupied with the pursuits of grammar ; but he has been encouraged by the general interest excited by the results of his investigations ; and now, that he has gained a high reputation as an accurate and sagacious critic, he is still young enough to enjoy the more pleasing studies, which relate to the ancient poets and the history of the arts.

The Grammar, of which Professor Everett has given a translation, though originally designed for schools, is no abridgment or compilation, made from the works of others, but offers the fruits of long continued observation. It is now many years, since Buttmann first published his elements of the Greek language. His object was to prepare a work, which should contain only the information needed by beginners. But his plan was enlarged in consequence of the reception given to his labors by the public. Like so many of

his countrymen, who concentrate the whole energies of their minds in their studies, and devote to some favorite branch of learning the best years of their lives, and all those precious moments, which others give up to pleasure, politics, or gain, he has passed a laborious life in the pursuits of grammar and criticism. As his work became extensively used throughout the best schools of Germany, he was enabled to make in it many improvements at the suggestion of practical men, or of the learned teachers, employed in the German seminaries; and in the mean time the treasures of knowledge, which are semiannually collected at the great literary mart of Leipsic, have always contained valuable additions to every branch of philology, and especially to every branch connected with the Greek language.

Buttmann is an older scholar than Thiersch, and his Grammar is more firmly established as a school book. It departs, also, very much less from the usual track, and being less offensive to those, who are opposed to innovations, is best adapted to the wants of our country. We earnestly hope it may be introduced into our higher seminaries. There are two things, which may reasonably be expected in a grammarian of the Greek language; an accurate acquaintance with the principles of general grammar, and a thorough knowledge of the peculiarities of the Greek dialects. Both these the learned Prussian possesses in an eminent degree. His countrymen, at least some of the newest school of criticism, do not think him sufficiently philosophical; but that only means, that he does not go out of his way to incorporate into a school book the most recent theories of the moods and tenses, and the latest definitions of the cases. Good sense and sound criticism characterize his work; he is always clear and methodical; repeating nothing, equally avoiding redundancies and omissions, and discussing every point with admirable brevity. Reliance may always be placed on his accuracy; and where his positions differ from the usual ones, (and in many parts, particularly in the paradigms of the verbs such differences may be found,) the reader may be sure that the difference is the result of careful research. If any are desirous of comparing this Grammar with those now in use, we would refer them especially to the part which treats of the verb, and to the syntax.

It would hardly become us to say how well the Eliot Professor has performed his part as translator. His wide reputation as a scholar, and his station in the ancient and distinguished University to which he belongs, are sufficient pledges, that the translation is all that it should be. Yet we cannot but mention one excellence, which is entirely his own; we mean the distinctness and precision with which all Greek words and examples have been rendered into English. He fully expresses the idea of the original, and, without doing violence to our own idioms, translates with almost verbal accuracy those important little phrases, which illustrate the rules. When the instructor compares this with the loose manner, in which the Greek peculiarities are rendered and explained in our common manuals, and perceives how much it assists him in teaching his pupils to comprehend and translate with careful accuracy, he will feel that Professor Everett merits no small thanks for his clearness and exactness.

The practical instructor may inquire, in what manner the present Grammar should be taught; and what is the course of studies to be pursued by those who make use of it?

It is obvious from a moment's inspection of Buttmann's Grammar, that it requires more close application than those, which contain only the accidence and plainest principles. A judicious teacher will at once perceive, that not every thing in it should be learnt by heart, and that much must be omitted by the beginner. Those parts, which are essentially necessary, before an attempt at translation can be made, should be pointed out, and thoroughly taught; while the rest should be reserved for a more advanced state. When this has been done, the next step is to take an elementary work, beginning with the simplest combinations of words. There should be no translation annexed, for if the learner has been properly grounded in the declensions and paradigms, he will be able without difficulty to give the root of any regular form, which he may meet, and his attention should not at first be directed to the anomalies. From the simplest sentences he should be led to those which are variously modified, and at last to those of the most artificial construction; care being taken, that the examples selected for use illustrate the rules of grammar in regular succession. The instructor should refer to the rule, which is to be applied, explain its

meaning, illustrate it by examples and by frequent repetition, and show its bearings, its limits, and the exceptions. It must then be committed to memory by the pupil ; and in this the greatest accuracy and strictest adherence to the words of the book must be required ; for confusion and uncertainty follow, if the pupil be allowed to substitute expressions of his own. The first school books used in the study of every language are arranged by the Germans on this principle. With us, those of French and Spanish are so, at least in regard to the writing of exercises, and the teachers are able to say, with how great advantage. For the study of Greek, such an elementary work has been prepared by Professor Jacobs, of Gotha, and expressly adapted to the Grammar, which Professor Everett has translated. This is already announced as on the eve of being published, and will much facilitate the study of Greek, by conducting the learner methodically from the simplest union of subject and predicate, to the full harmony and variety of the Attic periods.

When the pupil has thus become acquainted with the accordance and the syntax, and learnt their application from a judicious selection, like that of Jacobs, he should at once be introduced to Homer. The *Odyssey* contains a variety of stories, well suited to interest and delight the boyish mind, to teach lessons of prudence and virtue, and awaken a taste for learning and literary pleasures. When we consider the influence of the Chian bard on the characters of men, the brave and disinterested spirit, which he gave to his countrymen, the many poets that have caught their inspiration from him, the critics that have become conversant with beauty and sublimity through his works, the artists, who, from the days of Phidias to our own, have found in his immortal inventions the best subjects to employ the chisel, we cannot but wish, that the works, which have produced such glorious fruits wherever they have been cherished, should be studied, and understood, and valued by our young countrymen. So long as bravery and perseverance shall be honored, so long as the relations of family and friendship shall be acknowledged, so long as the mild and gentle affections shall be esteemed the best safeguards against the haughty actions of men, so long as liberty shall be prized and defended, the poems of Homer will awaken sympathy and admiration.

They present as a mirror the purest qualities of our nature, and since their beauties rest on the true delineations of the human passions, working within the mind, or expressed in action, they have been welcomed by every age and every nation, and are hardly less grateful to the innocence of boyhood, than to the maturity of scholarship.

Herodotus, too, will have charms for the youngest; for he unites an almost childish simplicity with an acute and inquisitive mind, a manly love of liberty, and the accuracy of a discriminating historian. In our schools and colleges we are already accustomed to read extracts from this delightful writer; but we do not read enough, nor the proper parts. Nothing better can be read in the years when the deepest impressions are made, than the original history of the Grecian victories, which began at Marathon. We should not entertain the young students with the fables, which are scattered through the first books of Herodotus, but direct him to the more inspiring matters of fact, which are contained in Erato and the three following Muses.*

There is one other author we would willingly put into the hands of the young student, who desires to become acquainted with the spirit no less than the character of the Greeks; we mean the elegant biographer of the heroes and statesmen of antiquity. Plutarch, under the disguise of translations, has gained a place in almost every modern library, and though our English version of his *Lives* is deficient in spirit, he still seizes on the attention, and is read with delight. It seems established by universal consent, that he is much to be recommended; and if the Attic dialect is really to be taught, why should not this eloquent moralist be presented to the young in the polished elegance of his native language?

By the study of the authors we have named, the learner will receive no impressions but those, which are favorable to virtue and liberty; and he will have become so far possessed of the idioms and syntax of the Greek tongue, as to be able to understand the tragedians. Thucydides is so much of a rhetorician, that he will serve as the best author, preparatory

* The history of the first invasion of Darius commences at the 94th section of the sixth book. No better school book for the Greek language can be put into the hands of the young, than might be made of the residue of this book and the three following, which constitute the history of the wars with Persia

to the study of the orators. The diligent will soon master the difficulties of his style, and enjoy his strength, his eloquence, his rapid narration, and his skill in estimating the motives of action, and delineating the characters of men.

But after all, the choice of authors should in a great measure be left to the instructor, who, if he knows his business as a teacher, and understands his branch, will best be able to select those, suited to the capacity of his pupils, and calculated to excite an interest in the study of Greek letters. It is our misfortune, that we confine the attention of all to the same dull round of elementary books, instead of introducing them to the Grecian Muse herself. Our youth have the means of contemplating solitary fragments, but not of learning to admire the symmetry of a perfect whole. We instruct in a few compilations, and leave the great body of Greek literature to remain unknown, or to make friends for itself. We are in consequence exposed to many evils; while some regard with undue admiration everything that is ancient, others depreciate the whole study of classic literature, and declare it of no practical value, because little profit has thus far resulted from the imperfect methods, by which it has been pursued. It is an intimate acquaintance with the Grecian literature, which will prove useful and pleasant. We must grasp at the forms, which are seen floating at a distance in shadowy sublimity, and hold them fast, till they assume distinct shapes and intelligible voices. The Attic Muse delights and instructs as a bosom friend, when close acquaintance has worn away all that is foreign in her air, when she admits us to her confidence, and shows us by what arts she has gained her perennial youth and beauty.

ART. VI.—*Ali Hissas di Tepeleni, Bassà di Jannina; Prospetto storico e politico del Sig. Malte-Brun.** In the Florence Antologia. 1821.

FRUITFUL as this age has been of extraordinary men, the individual, of whom we now propose to give an account, is

* We have not been able to see this sketch in the original French.